

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Pages 19-20, bridging paragraph [0032]:

[0032]

The hot pressing is carried out at 2000°C to 2400°C. The temperature ~~raising~~ rising up to this hot pressing treatment temperature is preferably carried out gradually and stepwise. When the temperature is raised in this manner, the chemical change, the state change, and the like that are generated at each temperature can be allowed to proceed sufficiently, and as a result, the intermingling of impurities and the generation of cracks and pores can be prevented. A preferable example of the temperature raising step will be shown below. First, a forming mold containing 5 to 10 g of a source material powder is placed within a furnace, and the inside of the furnace is brought into a vacuum state of 10^{-4} torr. The temperature is raised gradually from room temperature to 200°C, and is maintained at 200°C for about 30 minutes. Thereafter, the temperature is raised to 700°C in 6 to 10 hours, and is maintained at 700°C for 2 to 5 hours. In the temperature raising step from room temperature to 700°C, elimination of adsorbed moisture and organic solvent takes place, and carbonization of the non-metallic sintering auxiliary also proceeds. The period of time for holding a predetermined temperature differs depending on the size of the silicon carbide sintered body, and may be suitably set to a preferable period of time. Also, whether the holding time is sufficient or not can be determined by using as a target the time point at which the decrease in the vacuum degree becomes small to a certain degree. Next, the temperature is raised from 700°C to 1500°C in 6 to 9 hours, and is maintained at 1500°C for about 1 to 5 hours. While the temperature is maintained at 1500°C, the reaction of silicon oxide being reduced to change into silicon carbide proceeds (formula (I)). If the holding time is insufficient, silicon dioxide remains and adheres to the silicon carbide powder surface. This hinders the densification of the particles and causes growth of large particles, so that it is not

preferable. Whether the holding time is sufficient or not can be determined using, as a target, whether the generation of carbon monoxide, which is a byproduct, has stopped or not, namely whether or not the decrease in the vacuum degree has ceased and has recovered to the vacuum degree of 1300°C which is the temperature at the start of reduction reaction ~~or not~~.

In the present Abstract of the Disclosure, please delete the heading “Abstruct” and substitute -- Abstract -- therefor.